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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/884,079	06/20/2001	Yang-Lim Choi	Q64191	1645
7590	06/21/2004		EXAMINER	
SUGHRUE, MION, ZINN, MACPEAK & SEAS, PLLC 2100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20037-3213			CHEN, WENPENG	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2624	
DATE MAILED: 06/21/2004				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/884,079	CHOI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Wenpeng Chen	2624	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>7,8</u> .	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____.

Specification

1. The incorporation of essential material in the specification by reference to a foreign application or patent, or to a publication is improper. Applicant is required to amend the disclosure to include the material incorporated by reference. The amendment must be accompanied by an affidavit or declaration executed by the applicant, or a practitioner representing the applicant, stating that the amendatory material consists of the same material incorporated by reference in the referencing application. See *In re Hawkins*, 486 F.2d 569, 179 USPQ 157 (CCPA 1973); *In re Hawkins*, 486 F.2d 579, 179 USPQ 163 (CCPA 1973); and *In re Hawkins*, 486 F.2d 577, 179 USPQ 167 (CCPA 1973).

The Applicants make incorporation of essential material in the specification by reference Korean Patent Application No. 00-62163 in page 7, lines 15-18. Korean Patent Application No. 00-62163 is not the priority foreign application of the present application and thus cannot be incorporated.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention.

a. In page 10, lines 13-20, the specification states that:

"Next, the similarity is determined based on the continuous relaxation labeling with the compatibility coefficients (step 108). As previously described, in a continuous relaxation labeling process, the initial probability is updated on the basis of compatibility coefficients, and a more recent labeling status. Once the initial probability is assumed, the probability is updated depending on the compatibility coefficients. The compatibility coefficients are used in modeling possible matching conditions to reach a satisfactory labeling."

(1) How the similarity is determined based on the continuous relaxation labeling with the compatibility coefficients is not taught in the specification. (2) How the compatibility coefficients are used in modeling possible matching conditions to reach a satisfactory labeling is neither disclosed in the specification. The Applicants are requested to point out explicitly where in the specification that can enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to implement the tasks recited in the above statements (1) and (2). More specifically, how a line j is finally labeled with a selected label is not clear.

Because Claim 1 calls for the limitation of "measuring the similarity between the query and model images on the basis of continuous relaxation labeling using the compatibility coefficients."

b. The meaning of the equation that defines $\rho(i, j, \lambda, \lambda')$ in page 10 is not clear.

-- How shall one calculate the following expression? Is it a multiplication operation? If yes, how can it be a measure of difference in compatibility between node-label pairs? What is α ?

$$, \|\xi_{ij}^{(k)} \xi_{\lambda\lambda'}^{(k)}\|^\alpha$$

c. The symbols α_i and α shown in the equations in page 11 are not defined. Without clear definitions of these symbols, one cannot implement the claimed invention.

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

1. Claims 9 and 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for the following reasons.

-- Claim 9 refers the symbol α that is not defined either in claims nor specification.
-- Claim 11 refers the symbol α_i that is not defined either in claims nor specification.
-- Claim 12 recites Zucker's theory that is not defined in patents or literatures.
-- Claim 12 refers the symbol α that is not defined either in claims nor specification.

-- Claim 9 recites an equation related to the following expression for which the operation is not clear:

$$\|\xi_{ij}^{(k)} \xi_{\lambda\lambda'}^{(k)}\|^\alpha$$

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-2, 4-7 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Christmas et al. ("Structure Matching in Computer Vision Using Probabilistic Relaxation,"

Christmas, W. J. et al., IEEE Trans. On Pattern Analysis and Machine Intelligence, vol. 17, no. 8, August 1995, pages 749-764.)

Christmas teaches a line based image matching method comprising:

-- collecting line information of a query image and model images; (right column , page 757, 1st-3rd paragraphs after section VII; The scene image is the query image. The model is the model image.)

- wherein the line information of each of the query and model images is expressed by shape descriptors; (right column , page 757, 1st-3rd paragraphs after section VII)

-- defining a binary relation between lines of the query image and lines of the model images; (Section II; right column , page 757, 1st-3rd paragraphs after section VII; Four binary relations are given.)

- wherein the binary relation is invariant with respect to rotations, scale changes and translations; (1st paragraph of page 758)

- wherein the binary relation includes at least one of an angular difference between two lines, a ratio of the lengths of the two lines, a relative location of the two lines, and a relative distance between the two lines; (3rd paragraph after section VII)

-- measuring compatibility coefficients of node-label pairs of the query and model images based on the binary relation; (section IV, page 753; Section VII in page 758, equations 44-45)

- wherein measuring the compatibility coefficients of the node-label pairs based on the binary relation comprises:

--- measuring the binary relation, denoted by ξ_{ij} , for two nodes i and j within the set of lines of the query image; (3rd paragraph after section VII; equation (18) in page 753)

--- measuring the binary relation, denoted by $\xi_{\lambda\lambda'}$, for two labels λ and λ' within the set of lines for each of the model images; (3rd paragraph after section VII; equation (18) in page 753)

--- measuring the compatibility coefficients, denoted by $r_{ij}(\lambda, \lambda')$, for the node-label pairs of the query and each of the model images; (equation (18) in page 753; The p values are the compatibility coefficients.)

- wherein the compatibility coefficients $r_{ij}(\lambda, \lambda')$ as a measure of the strength of compatibility between the node-label pairs have high values corresponding to compatibility and low values corresponding to incompatibility; (The exponential equation results in a high value when the difference between the binary relations of the node-label pairs is small.)

-- measuring the similarity between the query and model images on the basis of continuous relaxation labeling using the compatibility coefficients; (page 751, 2nd paragraph including Equation (1); last paragraph of Section III in page 753; Section VIII A shows that road images are matched to model images. Matching inherently requires measuring the similarity between the query and model images.)

-- wherein before measuring the similarity on the basis of the continuous relaxation labeling, further comprising assigning a uniform initial probability to a predetermined number of upper node-label pairs in which the sums of the highest degree of support by each adjacent label for the nodes are within the range of an upper level, the initial probability being close to the final probability. (section V; especially sub-sections V.B and B.C; Only a selected model labels are assigned a constant given in Eq. (36). When these values are inserted into the support equation (15), the sum is limited to a value of $M_i \times$ the constant. Without specifying what is the condition close to the final probability, the selected initial condition is considered to meet the recited limitation.)

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Christmas as applied to Claim 6, and further in view of Spiegel et al. (US patent 5,940,538.)

Christmas as discussed above teaches Claim 1. Christmas further teaches:

-- normalizing the set of lines to determine the normalized set of lines as the shape descriptors. (section VIII A; The image and map are scaled to match each other approximately. The lengths of lines are inherently normalized in the scaling process.)

However, it does not teach the extracting, thinning and concatenating steps recited in Claim 3.

Spiegel teaches a method of detecting border of an object comprising:

-- extracting the skeleton of an object image; (Fig. 12A; edge detector 1210; The edge is the skeleton.)

-- thinning the skeleton; (Fig. 12A; edge thinner 1230)

-- concatenating corresponding pixels based on the extracted skeleton to obtain a set of lines. (Fig. 12A; edge linker 1240)

It is desirable to increase the accuracy of line extraction. It is obvious that the accuracy of line extraction can be achieved with the increase of edge detection that as pointed out by Spiegel can be in turn achieved with edge thinning. (column 20, lines 7-16) It would have been

obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of the invention, to apply Spiegel's teaching to extract lines from Christmas's model and query because the combination improves the accuracy of line extraction and thus improves matching accuracy. The combination thus teaches:

- extracting the skeleton of a model image;
- thinning the skeleton;
- concatenating corresponding pixels based on the extracted skeleton to obtain a set of lines.

6. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Christmas as applied to Claim 6, and further in view of Yu et al. (US patent 5,274,744.)

Christmas as discussed above teaches Claim 6. Christmas further teaches updating probability according to Eq. (14) in page 752.

However, it does not teach to set the compatibility coefficients as recited in Claim 6. Yu teaches a relaxation labeling process:

-- wherein the compatibility coefficients $r_{ij}(\lambda, \lambda')$ are determined as 1 if the relation of a node pair (i, j) coincides with the relation of a label pair (λ, λ') . (column 1, line 52 to column 2, line 32)

It is desirable not to change the probability if these two relations are not related to improve the updating process. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of the invention, to apply Yu's teaching to modify, including normalization, Christmas's Eq. (14) to be in the range of $[-1, 1]$, therefore the compatibility coefficients $r_{ij}(\lambda, \lambda')$ are determined as 1 if the binary relation of a node pair (i, j) of the query image coincides with the binary relation of a label pair (λ, λ') because the combination improves the updating process.

7. Claims 13-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Christmas as applied to Claim 1, and further in view of Imagawa (US patent 5,479,570.)

Christmas as discussed above teaches Claim 1. However, it does not teach the feature related to measuring similarity recited in the claims.

Imagawa teaches a method of pattern matching for image (column 6, lines 55-58) comprising the following features:

-- where measuring the similarity between the query and model data features comprises:

- calculating the sum of the distances between corresponding query to model data feature pairs of the query and the model data; (column 8, lines 1-67; Because each pattern is represented by a vector given in Eq. (7), the distance given in Eq. (10) is the sum of the distances between corresponding query to model data feature pairs.)

- determining the reciprocal of the sum of the distances as the similarity between corresponding two query and model data features; (column 7, lines 53-67)

-- wherein the distances are measured using the Euclidean distance. (Eq. (10))

It is desirable to have various approaches of pattern matching to provide process flexibility. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of the invention, to include Imagawa's steps for measuring similarity between the query and model images in Christmas's method because the combination improves flexibility. The combination thus teaches the following features:

-- where measuring the similarity between the query and model images comprises:

-- calculating the sum of the distances between corresponding node-to-label pairs of the sets of lines for the query and each of the model images; and determining the reciprocal of the sum of the distances as the similarity between corresponding two images.

Examiner's Statement

8. Because the above-discussed issues of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraphs, the Examiner does not compare Claims 9 and 11-12 with the prior art.

Conclusion

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Wenpeng Chen whose telephone number is 703 306-2796. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 am - 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David K Moore can be reached on 703 308-7452. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9306 for regular communications and 703-872-9306 for After Final communications. TC 2600's customer service number is 703-306-0377.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703 305-4700.

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Wenpeng Chen
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2624

June 18, 2004

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wenpeng Chen".